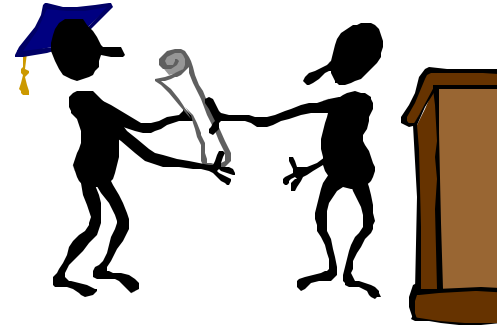


A HANDY GUIDE TO DEVELOPING BEHAVIOR PLANS



ARIZONA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
EXCEPTIONAL STUDENT SERVICES
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Effective classrooms are characterized by order, appropriate reinforcement of rules, and purposeful activity. It is important to carefully plan and structure the classroom environment by clearly defining classroom rules and expectations. Learning can be facilitated by arranging the instructional setting and developing organizational procedures. By using these techniques, teachers can effectively prevent many inappropriate, disruptive, and unproductive behaviors. Lack of discipline in the classroom may promote the escalation of unacceptable or challenging behaviors for some students. Recognizing the importance of promoting positive behaviors from students rather than controlling students' actions, can be effective in improving student performance. Parent involvement in the Individual Education Program (IEP) process, particularly when addressing behavioral concerns, can serve not only to coordinate efforts for the benefit of the student, but can serve to enhance the communication between the family and school.



NEW REQUIREMENTS

New provisions of the law, enacted since the last revision of this document, are indicated within the highlighted areas below.

The IEP Team shall in the case of a child whose behavior impedes his or her learning or that of others, consider, when appropriate, strategies, including positive behavioral interventions, strategies, and supports to address that behavior. [PL 105-17, Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), Sec. 614 (d)(3)(B)(i)]



Behavior supports, strategies, and/or positive behavioral intervention plans must now be considered for inclusion in a student's IEP. The purpose of this document is to assist in the development of the IEP. Parents, general education teachers, special education teachers, evaluators, administrators, and students, as appropriate, should all participate in the IEP meeting. The primary goal of an effective behavioral strategy is to produce long-lasting

behavior change by building supportive environments and teaching alternative skills.

Behavior plans incorporated into the IEP should outline:

- behaviors that are expected or prohibited;
- the positive and negative consequences for those behaviors;
- a clear indication of what will occur at the time of a critical behavioral event; **and**
- specific meeting dates or intervals as a means of monitoring the effectiveness of the plan.

If the local education agency did not conduct a functional behavioral assessment and implement a behavioral intervention plan for such child before the behavior that resulted in the suspension, the agency shall convene an IEP meeting to develop an assessment plan to address that behavior.

[615 (k)(1)(B)(i)]



The IEP team must recognize that different types of behaviors will warrant different types of intervention. Disrespect for rules, noncompliance, disruptive behaviors, and fighting should be addressed differently than behaviors related to drugs or bringing weapons to school. In order to address the behavior needs of the student, the IEP team must first conduct a functional behavioral assessment that can be used to build effective behavioral supports, strategies, and/or positive intervention plans. The team in conducting a functional behavior assessment should:



- **Identify behaviors**

Behaviors should be defined in observable and measurable terms.

- **Prioritize behaviors**

The team will identify which behavior to address first.

- **Quantify the extent of the specific behavior**

The team will identify patterns of behavior by establishing a baseline of the current behavior. The behavior may be described by frequency (the number of times the behavior occurs in a given period); duration (length of time the behavior lasts); or intensity (the seriousness, loudness, or strength related to the behavior). This information assists the IEP team in determining whether the intervention plan makes the problem better or worse or has no impact. (See the AZ-TAS document on "Incorporating the Use of Non-Aversive Behavior Management" for data collection information.)

- **Identify antecedents**

An antecedent is any event that occurs prior to a behavior and sets up the occasion for the behavior to occur. The team needs to discuss and document:

- 1) what times (***when***), places (***where***), specific people or groups (***who***), and activities (***what***) appear **most likely** to occur prior to the challenging behaviors; **and**
- 2) what times, places, specific people or groups, and activities appear **least likely** to occur prior to the challenging behaviors.

- **Identify the consequences**

A consequence is any response from others that follows the behavior which may result in an increase or decrease in behavior.

- **Identify the possible function of the behavior**

Misbehavior is not random: a student gets something out of exhibiting the behavior. The team needs to determine if the challenging behavior communicates the need for:

attention - draws attention away from others and to oneself;

avoidance/escape - ends or avoids an event or activity that the student does not like;

control - struggles to be in charge of people and events;

revenge - punishes others for something that happened to the student;

self regulation - relates to the student's physical state which leads to increasing or decreasing sensory input and shifting body position, in order to facilitate comfort level;

coping – tolerates something that is unpleasant or not desired; **and/or**

self-entertainment/play - occurs when student is bored or when he/she wishes to interact with peers but does not have necessary skills.

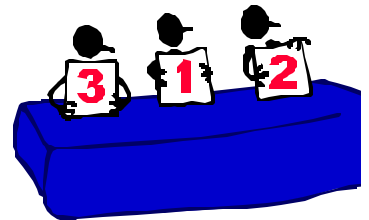
To determine the function of a student's misbehavior, identify what happens after the student misbehaves. For example, if a student's behavior results in attention from the teacher in the form of a reprimand, and the behavior increases, you can deduce that the function of the behavior is to gain attention. If a student consistently misbehaves and avoids doing class work, the student may be seeking to avoid that activity. Ideally, the intervention procedures should provide the student with reinforcement for the desired behavior rather than for the misbehavior.

It is essential that objectives of a positive behavioral intervention plan emphasize the teaching of appropriate behavior as opposed to merely the reduction of inappropriate behavior. The key to finding solutions is through an open exploration of supports, strategies, and interventions, with the involvement of the student, parents, and key personnel. For many students, **there is no quick fix** for disruptive behavior, but the following three types of interventions should be considered in developing a behavior plan.

I. Behavioral Supports/Environmental Changes

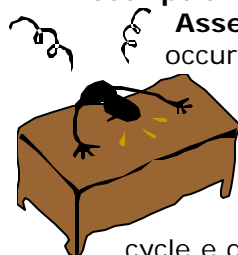
Behavioral Supports are those environmental modifications that minimize any factors which are contributing to the behavior. Use the Behavioral Support/Environmental Changes section of the Checklist on page 7 for identifying which factors contribute to the behavior. The team needs to determine whether any of the following are contributing factors to the behavior and whether modification will result in a decrease in the behavior.

- 1) physiological factors e.g., illness, thirst, hunger, fatigue;
- 2) environmental factors e.g., noise level, classroom arrangement, temperature, accessibility of needed materials, crowding;
- 3) curricular expectations e.g., task too hard or too easy, instructional activity too long or too short, too much or too little structure;
- 4) grouping/staffing patterns e.g., staff to student ratios, student to student dynamics; **or**
- 5) inconsistency of teaching style e.g., lecture, cooperative learning, assignments with student's learning style e.g., visual, auditory, kinesthetic.



EXAMPLE:

Description of behavior: student falls asleep



Assessment results: nurse/student indicates no health problems, behavior occurs after lunch when room is warm, student indicates difficulty getting back to sleep once awakened during the night

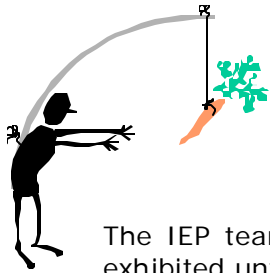
Function of behavior: self-regulation

Behavioral supports: adjust room temperature; determine if student worries are interfering with sleep and support student in addressing worries; explore with student/family techniques to interrupt non sleep cycle e.g., warm milk, get up and read for 10 minutes.

If the team decides that there are no environmental factors contributing to the behavior of concern, the team should discuss whether the implementation of proactive strategies would be appropriate.

II. Proactive Strategies

Proactive strategies are instructional techniques, which become effective over a period of time. These are strategies, which are not dependent upon the occurrence of undesired behavior. Use the Proactive Strategies section of the Checklist on page 8 for determining which strategy to implement. Types of proactive strategies include:



- 1) replacement skills e.g., cues, key words;
- 2) coping skills e.g., role playing, positive self talk; **and**
- 3) prosocial skills e.g., nonverbal communication/body language, social relationships, self management, and study skills.

The IEP team still needs to address what to do when the undesirable behavior is exhibited until the proactive strategies become effective.

EXAMPLE:

Description of behavior: throws materials

Assessment results: the student has no way to communicate the need to end the activity

Function of behavior: to end a specified activity

Proactive strategy: the team identifies an acceptable replacement behavior that meets this need, then teaches and reinforces the replacement behavior e.g., take card with printed word and symbol for “finished” to teacher who reinforces “new skill” by directing student to choice of preferred activities for five minutes.

The team should identify the specific situations that seem to precipitate the student’s behavior and teach the student more effective ways to handle those situations.

EXAMPLE:

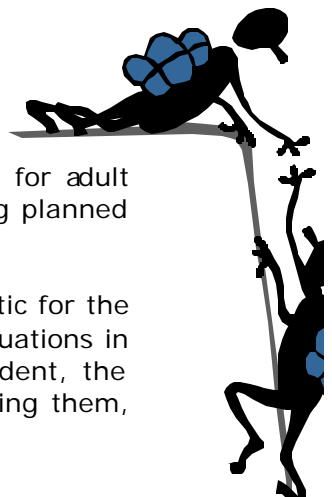
Description of behavior: pushing other students

Assessment results: the antecedent which precipitates the behavior is when the student is bumped or jostled by other students and then is poked or tripped by the other students when they notice he is beginning to get upset

Function of behavior: coping

Proactive strategy: teach strategies for staying calm when standing in line or walking down the hall; teach the student how and when to use various strategies for dealing with the poking or tripping, such as asking for adult help, using “I” statements to respectfully confront the tormentors or using planned ignoring.

In essence, the idea is to identify past situations that have been problematic for the student and practice proactive strategies for dealing calmly with similar situations in the future. Because the strategies are likely to be new skills for the student, the student will need coaching, which involves teaching the skills, demonstrating them,

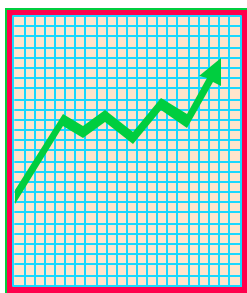


structuring practice opportunities, correcting errors, giving positive feedback, and providing ongoing encouragement. It is important to recognize that for many students with disabilities there is a need to teach certain skills so the student can interact with other students and behave in a socially appropriate way. Though most students acquire these skills indirectly, many students with disabilities must be taught these skills systematically and directly.

If proactive strategies are determined inappropriate or are not effective in addressing the behavior needs of the student, the team needs to convene and develop a formal positive behavioral intervention plan.

III. Positive Behavioral Intervention Plan

The IEP team must include the following components when developing a positive behavioral intervention plan:



- 1) dates of previously used strategies and/or interventions and their effectiveness;
- 2) description of the problem;
- 3) baseline measurement;
- 4) assessment results/identification of antecedents;
- 5) measurable goals/ objectives/benchmarks; **and**
- 6) description of plan to teach and reinforce appropriate behavior and what to do when the inappropriate behavior does occur. (See pages 9-10 for techniques to defuse inappropriate/aggressive behaviors.)

The regular education teacher of the child, as a member of the IEP Team, shall, to the extent appropriate, participate in the development of the IEP of the child, including the determination of appropriate positive behavioral interventions and strategies and the determination of supplementary aids and services, program modifications, and support for school personnel. [614 (d)(3)C]

IEP Documentation

The present level of performance should address:

- 1) the student's strengths and needs in the area of behavior and social skills as demonstrated in general education, special education, and extracurricular activities;
- 2) the description of the problem/history of the behavior; **and**
- 3) the baseline measurement of the behavior of concern.

The IEP behavior plan addendum should address:

- 1) the results of a functional assessment e.g., identify possible contributing factors, antecedents, consequences, and potential reinforcers for the child based on their preferences;
- 2) the function the behavior serves for the student;
- 3) the accommodations/behavioral supports to be implemented;
- 4) the goals, objectives, and/or benchmarks reflecting proactive strategies and/or positive interventions which can be included with

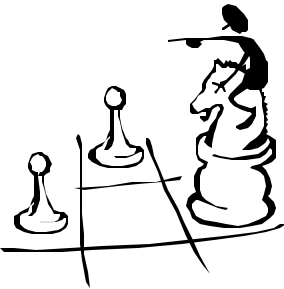


- the IEP goals/objectives section or on the behavior plan;
- 5) what data collection method will be used and who will collect the data;
 - 6) how long each support, strategy, or behavioral intervention will be implemented before evaluating the effectiveness of the behavior plan;
 - 7) transition back from an interim alternative educational setting; **and**
 - 8) how progress will be reported.

For further information on specific behavioral techniques, refer to Resources for Behavior Management on pages 17 - 18.

A free appropriate public education is available to all children with disabilities residing in the State between ages 3 and 21, inclusive, including children with disabilities who have been suspended or expelled from school. [612 (a)(1)(A)]

Suspension/Expulsion Requirements



Students with disabilities are not immune from normal school disciplinary rules; however, in addressing critical behavioral events, the IEP team must determine whether the offense is caused by or is a manifestation of the student's disability. Before any changes can be made regarding services, the IDEA requires the IEP team to reevaluate a student's IEP whenever conditions warrant, including alleged misbehavior. If the inappropriate behavior was a manifestation of the student's disability, additional intervention plans, alternative programming, and other resources must be considered by the IEP team. If the behavior was not a manifestation of the student's disability, normal disciplinary procedures may be used, however, IEP services must be continued. (See pages 12-16 for further information on Suspension/Expulsion.)

The State educational agency examines data to determine if significant discrepancies are occurring in the rate of long-term suspensions and expulsions of children with disabilities among local educational agencies in the State; or compared to such rates for nondisabled children within such agencies. [612 (a)(22)(A)(i and ii)]

BEHAVIORAL SUPPORT, STRATEGIES, AND POSITIVE INTERVENTIONS CHECKLIST

Name: _____ School: _____ Date: _____

Does student need an
individual behavior plan?

? YES ? NO

Does student need a
504-accommodation plan?

? YES ? NO

Modifications were considered
but were not needed for this student

? YES ? NO

To assure coordination among regular, vocational, and special education, the checked interventions and/or accommodations have been approved by the team for courses listed.

Curriculum Area

						SUPPORT, STRATEGIES AND INTERVENTIONS
						ACCOMMODATIONS
						1. Allow students to leave class for extra assistance
						2. Provide oral tests/reports/assignments
						3. Allow short answer/modified/open book tests
						4. Tape or highlight texts/worksheets/assignments/lectures
						5. Extend time for completion of assignments
						6. Shorten assignments/number of items
						7. Structure assignment notebooks/sheets/organizers
						8. Facilitate Peer Tutoring
						9. Provide study sheets/teacher guides/copies of lecture notes
						10. Allow frequent and repeated review/drill
						11. Reduce pencil/paper tasks
						12. Provide access to calculators/computers
						13. Provide choice in learning activities
						14. Accept partially correct assignment responses
						15. Repeat, rephrase questions and directions
						16. Other:
						17. Other:
						BEHAVIORAL SUPPORT/ENVIRONMENTAL CHANGES
						1. Allow frequent breaks/vary activities
						2. Define limits
						3. Provide for cooling off period when needed
						4. Structure classroom routine predictability
						5. Use clear, concise, and simple language
						6. Have specific locations for all materials (pencils, pouches, tabs in notebooks, etc.)
						7. Provide preferential seating/altered seating arrangement/study carrels
						8. Schedule content instruction at optimal learning times for students
						9. Use a variety of teaching modalities (visual, auditory, kinesthetic), combined seeing, saying, writing and doing
						10. Make requests not demands
						11. Move about and scan the room
						12. Address inappropriate behavior in private
						13. Adjust for physiological factors e.g., illness, thirst, hunger, fatigue
						14. Change grouping/staffing patterns
						15. Adjust noise level/room temperature

TIPS ON NEUTRALIZING OR MOMENTARILY CALMING THE IMMEDIATE SITUATION

Think what message you are communicating by:

- your position and proximity to the student (avoid being a threat, avoid chasing, keep student safe).
- how quickly or slowly you are talking or moving.
- your tone of voice.
- the intensity of your response (if student is loud you should be quiet).

Try not to focus on the struggle, think what you want the student to do instead.



Provide a fair and logical option to calm the moment. What can you and the student do to neutralize the situation? Consider that the student may be scared, confused. or need to "save face."

Before making a request, ask yourself, "Am I willing to bet my paycheck on the student following my request?" If the answer is "no" think of something else to do.

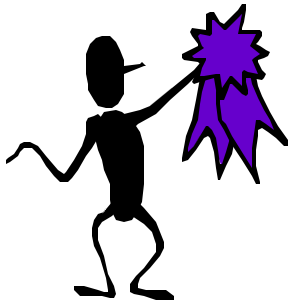
One way to minimize focusing on the problem behavior is, whenever possible, continue to follow the natural flow of the day.

When safety is an issue interrupt the behavior to avoid injury, supporting not punishing the student.

Remember there is a qualitative difference between ignoring a person's behavior and ignoring the person. Find a way to minimize attention given to a behavior and continue to offer support.

- If necessary, adjust the environment to prevent things from getting worse.
- If you think your response is making things worse, stop and reevaluate.

TIPS ON REFOCUSING STUDENTS' ATTENTION ON WHAT YOU WANT THEM TO DO

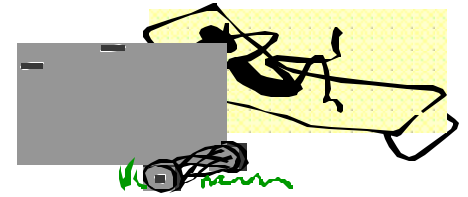


Try to be subtle, present the alternative activity as if it were part of the regular scheme of things. Example: Ask the student to deliver something to another room.

Avoid over-prompting. Provide information clearly and concisely without annoying student. Avoid nagging. Use subtle, nonverbal cues.

Be creative when generating options for engaging the student. Use your sense of humor. Sometimes you can motivate a student by sharing rewards or engaging in conversation. The vehicle for student participation does not have to be a task or activity.

- Present options that match the student's learning style.
- Avoid stating requests in a way that the student may view as demanding or tense.
- Take frequent mini-breaks to ensure the activity doesn't become too, demanding.
- Provide specific closure cues. During difficult times we need to know when the ordeal will end.
- Use the activity as a vehicle to engage the student. Avoid turning the activity into a roadblock.



Be creative. Use all available options for participating, including asking the student to instruct you on how to participate.

Once the difficult moment passes take care to avoid decreasing support too quickly as that may prompt another incident.

Do not force a student to process an incident until he or she is ready to do so, otherwise it may escalate the behavior.

TIPS FOR PROVIDING IMMEDIATE FEEDBACK AND REWARD FOR ANY EFFORT THE STUDENT MAKES TO TURN THE SITUATION AROUND

Initiate giving and sharing rewards immediately. Accept any level of effort made to participate.

Acts of human kindness are not limited to verbal praise. Be creative. There are many ways to express appreciation.



Use humor to lighten the mood. Use the opportunity to show students how to be reassuring and positive with someone who is challenging. Teach students to avoid the trap of being nice to someone for doing what you want.

Be a positive role model. Demonstrate how caring and helping in a time of need is never a mistake.

The bulk of your contact with the student should be rewarding not demanding.

If the student rejects your attempt to show appreciation, do not take it personally. Reflect on how difficult it is at times to accept praise if we feel bad about ourselves.

Consider stating a complement as an "I" message, which may be easier for the student to accept.

Take the time to teach reciprocity. Create opportunities for students to do favors for you and other students.

Adapted from Hobbs. D. (1989). *Gentle Teaching: Discussion and Lecture Outline*.